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11 January 1966

CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING

(MAP, SOUTHERN AFR.)**RHODESIA**

(16)

I. The British Commonwealth opened a conference in Lagos, Nigeria, today to discuss the problem of Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence.

- A. British Prime Minister Harold Wilson is a reluctant delegate to the conference.
- B. He expects to be confronted with renewed pressures from African members of the Commonwealth to take stronger action against the break-away government in Rhodesia.
- C. Wilson decided to attend the conference in person, rather than send a lesser government figure, in order to shore up and thank the moderates like Nigeria who have gone along with the measured British response.
- D. The conference will not be as hard on Wilson as London had feared earlier.

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1. For one thing, he will be able to point to tangible, positive steps since the last meeting of the Organization of African Unity, such as the joint British-US-Canadian oil lift to Zambia.
 2. There are also some indications that the sanctions approach is beginning to have an effect on the Smith regime in Rhodesia.
 3. Finally, the conference is being boycotted by Ghana and Tanzania, two of the strongest advocates of more radical action--including military action--against Rhodesia.
- E. Wilson's main approach will be to get through the conference without any further formal commitment that Britain will not agree to independence for Rhodesia before majority rule is an accomplished fact there.
- II. Situations in the Republic of South Africa and in Portuguese Angola and Mozambique are relatively quiet at present. As a result, Rhodesia is the focus, for the moment, of the black-against-white confrontation in Africa.

- A. The illegal declaration of independence by Rhodesia's white minority has produced

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a great deal of emotionalism and a rare degree of unity among black African states.

B. Thus far, the African states have refrained from attempting their own direct solutions of the Rhodesian problem, but are putting great pressure on Britain to "crush" the Rhodesian regime.

1. The December 3, 1965 OAU Conference decided, in substance, to pressure Britain for more effective action against Rhodesia, rather than call for strong action by African states.
2. Zambia, which is crucial to any attempt by Africans to solve the Rhodesian problem, has so far followed Britain's lead. It has not offered to accept troops of other African nations within its borders, where they could get at Rhodesia. Zambia has also restrained emigré groups of Rhodesian Africans who have settled in Zambia.
3. Zambia is also the only African state which can hurt Rhodesia economically, but the Zambians have gone along with the British program, refraining from more extreme

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sanctions. In part, this is because the Rhodesian reaction could be just as damaging to Zambia.

C. If Britain does not dispose of Rhodesia's minority white regime soon, some African states will probably take more direct action themselves, probably designed to force British military intervention.

1. Zambia, for instance could stop all trade with Rhodesia, thus closing down Zambia's copper production which is vital to Britain.
2. Zambia could also agree to allow Rhodesian saboteurs, currently being trained by an OAU group in Tanzania, to infiltrate Rhodesia through Zambia.

D. Britain's Prime Minister Wilson has the difficult job of meeting both African Commonwealth insistence that Smith be brought down, and British public opinion, which has grave reservations about coercing its Rhodesian "kith and kin" to meet African demands.

1. London still hopes its economic measures will induce moderate white Rhodesians to form an alternative government, which could call for British support.

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2. There are, however, growing indications that London may be considering that ultimately some form of military intervention will be necessary to bring down the Smith regime and preserve some British influence in Africa.
3. If the illegal Rhodesian regime is defeated, Britain will still be pressured by Africans, in and out of Rhodesia, to give Rhodesia independence under African majority rule.

XIII. The black-white confrontation in southern Africa will probably re-emphasize the radical-moderate split among African governments.

- A. All African governments will continue to demand majority rule, but will probably differ on the methods of ending white minority rule in southern Africa.
- B. Those favoring attempts at a violent solution will probably include Tanzania, Egypt, Ghana, and probably Algeria, who are presently helping insurgent groups from the Portuguese territories, Rhodesia, and South Africa.
1. The other African states will continue to favor less radical methods such as economic and diplomatic sanctions.

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